

indicated the kind of assistance that had been given to that part of Ontario. I see you are moving to your feet, Mr. Speaker, so I shall resume my seat and let the hon. member for Sault Ste. Marie speak.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Before I recognize the next speaker in this debate, perhaps I should point out that by one of those coincidences that comes along once in every two lifetimes, the mover and the seconder of this motion both happen to have names the same as other members of the House. The hon. member who seconded the motion under discussion is the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles).

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Thank you for that favourable mention, Mr. Speaker.

● (1740)

Mr. Cyril Symes (Sault Ste. Marie): Mr. Speaker, first I should like to congratulate the hon. member for Algoma (Mr. Foster) on his attempt to talk out the bill. He did an excellent job, although I do not share his sentiment that the bill should be talked out.

I also congratulate the hon. member for Bellechasse (Mr. Lambert) on his motion. It is important that we try to get information from this government, especially the Department of Regional Economic Expansion. I find myself a bit more fortunate than the hon. member for Bellechasse in that I have in my possession a confidential document which I received just a few days ago, prepared by a study group of the Department of Regional Economic Expansion which examined northern Ontario. The study group produced a report entitled "The Ontario Regional Review". I think it contains some very important information which the committee on regional development should have had before it. I see there are a number of members of that committee in the House and I would be most happy to give them a copy of the report when I have concluded my remarks.

We in northern Ontario feel great sympathy for those in the Maritimes because, like the Maritimes and parts of Quebec and western Canada, we are an underdeveloped area. In northern Ontario, in the ten years from 1961 to 1971 employment rose by only 18 per cent, compared with a 47 per cent increase in Ontario and 43 per cent in the rest of Canada. The per capita income slipped from the equivalent of the Canadian average in 1961 to only 93 per cent of the national average in 1969. Chronic unemployment is one of our problems. Young people graduating from school not being able to find jobs and having to move to southern Ontario is another problem we face.

This report by the Department of Regional Economic Expansion highlights these very important problems and I should like to read some of its more important parts to the House. After examining the four years of operation of DREE, the report states:

In summary, northern Ontario occupies about the same relative position in the Canadian economy as it did four years ago when the region was first designated. It remains isolated from the mainstream of economic activity in the remainder of the province. As a slow-growth region its problems are akin to those in the west and to some extent the Maritimes.

Regional Economic Expansion

In another part of the report it is stated:

The growth prospects of the region must be viewed as mixed at best. While increases in output may be realized in the traditional sectors (i.e. mining, forestry, and related manufacturing) the employment gains will be relatively small and will certainly fall well short of the over-all job requirements for the region as specified by the Ontario government. The single-industry towns will continue to decline and the possibility of resource depletion—especially of minerals—creates some uncertainty regarding the longer term growth prospects of the region.

The report mentions specific problems in northern Ontario as follows:

Even the largest centres in the region have moved only slightly beyond their resource-based origins. Related to this are such infrastructure problems as the lack of adequate housing, inadequate sewage facilities and the lack of fully serviced industrial land. Third, remoteness from the major markets of North America results in higher transportation costs relative to, for example, the Toronto-centred region.

The report goes on to describe the DREE program in northern Ontario in these words:

In northern Ontario incentives amounting to \$31 million have been accepted by 57 firms. These firms are expected to create about 4,000 jobs with a capital investment of approximately \$200 million.

You will note that it is expected, not guaranteed. The report continues:

Two projects have been dominant in the over-all distribution of incentives in northern Ontario. Of the \$31 million in total incentives, Algoma Steel in Sault Ste. Marie has accepted \$12 million and Eckstall Mining in Hoyle township just east of Timmins has accepted \$8 million. Thus \$20 million has been committed to two projects; the remaining \$11 million is spread among 55 firms.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I think the hon. member for Algoma (Mr. Foster) has a question, if the hon. member for Sault Ste. Marie (Mr. Symes) agrees. The Chair will then present its own question to the hon. member.

Mr. Foster: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member referred to the grant made to the Algoma Steel Corporation and seemed to be in opposition to that grant. I was wondering whether he in fact believes that the grant made by the department to the Algoma Steel Corporation was a good one.

Mr. Symes: Mr. Speaker, the point being brought out in the report is that the majority of the grants made in northern Ontario have gone to two firms, one at Sault Ste. Marie and one at Timmins. As a result, the money spread among the other areas of northern Ontario has been rather thin.

The whole point of the motion of the hon. member for Bellechasse is that if we had access to this government's information, the study by the regional development committee could be of immense importance. When we went to Sudbury yesterday and heard the briefs from municipalities, organizations and individuals, this was the kind of problem brought forward. DREE had done studies, yet the local people have not had access to them in order to take advantage of them and develop programs and policies for northern Ontario. As a result, when we look at the situation in northern Ontario we find that the helter-skelter approach by the department has not solved our problems. We need a co-ordinated and over-all plan for this area.